

winter, large congregations, in fact too large for the capacity of the various missions, fill them with standing room at a premium. And they are not exactly congregations of worshippers, but rather of sleepers. The prospects of getting a shelter for the night, a cup of warm coffee and a few slices of bread brings the crowd. No other advertisement is needed. The news travels like wild fire and the superintendents have a serious problem in trying to find accommodations for the mobs of men who seek a shelter.

Every evening on State, Madison and Wells streets one can look through the glass doors of brilliantly-lighted missions and behold the spectacle of hundreds of ragged-looking auditors patiently waiting for the services to open up. Pretty soon the evangelists and singers will appear on the platform and the organ will strike the familiar notes of a well-known hymn. The audience raises and helps to swell the volume of singing. This over for the time being, the meeting opens up for personal experiences. One after the other converts give their testimonies. Choruses alternate with the testimonies. At times loud amens and hallelujahs are heard.

After a while an evangelist, wearing well-made clothes which form a sharp contrast to the attired garments worn by a large majority of the auditors, begins in a solemn voice to read from the Word the story of the "Prodigal Son," then unfolds a long address against sin. He is a trained speaker and as he proceeds his voice becomes at times harsh, then gradually sings to soft modulations. He is an expert in the art of moving a congregation to varied forms of emotion, to pathos, to sublime ideals. In buring words he pictures a hell to shun, but his listeners don't seem to appreciate his verbal efforts on their behalf. (Poor devils, they know more about a real hell in five minutes than the preacher will probably learn in a lifetime). The

novelty has long ago wore off and continual repetition has become monotonous. Abstractly they gaze at the speaker and appear to be bored. Their countenances plainly show that a quick ending of the ordeal will be welcome.

The atmosphere is close and the ventilation none too good. Now and then some lean over and peacefully fall asleep. The attendant whose business is to keep order is busily engaged in going from rows to rows of seats to shake the sleepers and remind them that sleeping is only permitted at the close of the service. The evangelist is finishing his sermon and is making a strong appeal for converts. The men wake up from their torpor, for they know that pretty soon hot coffee and bread is to be served. A closing hymn and the service is over. The evangelist and his assistants have left the hall. The Army of Despair remains together with the watchman. From the coat pockets newspapers gathered during the course of the day are spread upon the floor. Shoes are pulled off and are used as a substitute for a pillow. Those who possess shoes that are in good condition are well aware of the fact that some other man who is not very particular as to whose shoes he is wearing will without the least bit of hesitation appropriate theirs and discard his own for the better pair. Hence the safest way to wake up with the shoes still in one's possession is to sleep upon them.

The lights are turned off, the men stretch themselves upon their newspaper mattresses, the conversation ceases and the silence is broken now and then by the discordant notes of snoring escaping from the open mouth of some sleeper who has forgotten to turn on the side. A sickening and penetrating odor rises from the forms of human being closely packed together and a part of the Army of Despair sleeps, sleeps upon newspapers on the hard floor,